

THE TALKING MACHINE REVIEW

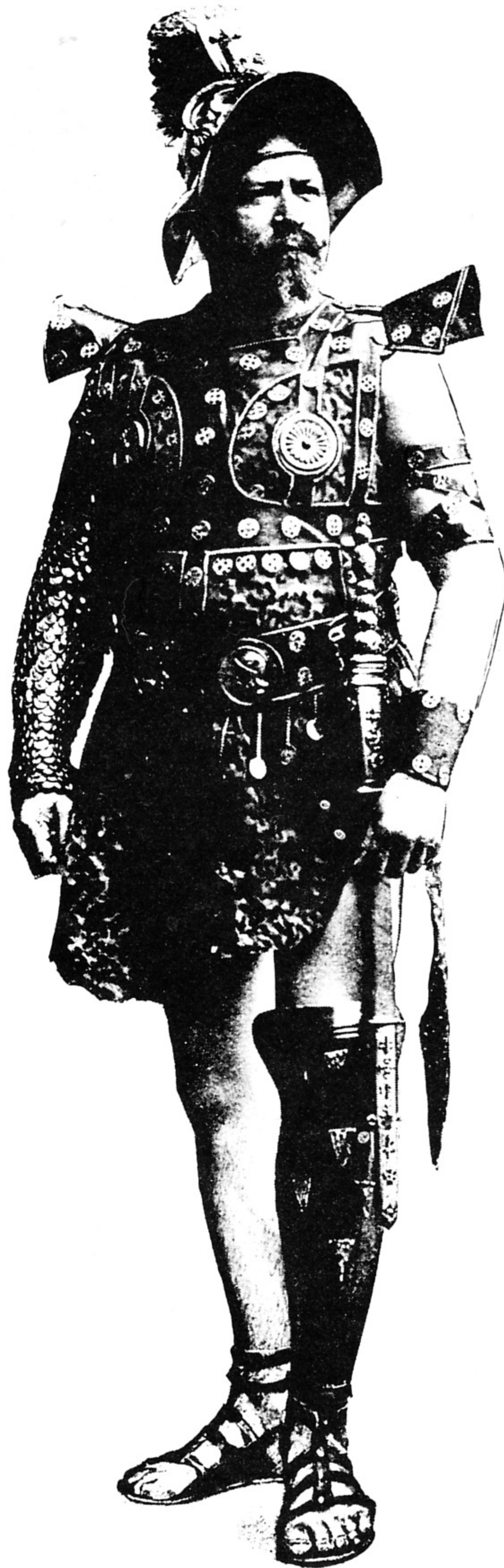


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[Photo : Guigoni and Bossi

TAMAGNO as Otello

EMI

Creator of the Role





ZENATELLO as *Otello*

Trumpet-voiced *Otello*

EDISON DISC MASTERS

The second of this series is being held over until the next issue because Mr. Raymond Wile has discovered new material and wishes to check his files before committing further notes for publication. It will make an absorbing study. We shall give you some fascinating facsimile reprints to accompany the next article.

OTELLO by J. D. Bain.

Shakespeare's great play has fascinated many composers. Dvorak wrote an overture and Pissini an opera based on it. However these pall into insignificance compared with Verdi's masterpiece.

Verdi was 74 when he wrote it in 1887 and had been regarded as the master of Italian Opera for over 40 years.

Too many of his operas, however, had suffered from an indifferent libretto. Il Trovatore springs readily to mind in this connection. In the composition of Otello he collaborated with Arrigo Boito, Italy's greatest poet and the composer of Mefistofele and later Nerone, both epic masterpieces.

Verdi and Boito produced the 'perfect' opera in "Otello". Not only perfect musically but also an opera which has drawn like a magnet some of the greatest artists who have ever trod the operatic stage.

The role of Otello is one of the most difficult of all tenor roles since it demands not only power of voice but also the ability to display nobility of character. This is very important, since the audience must be aware of how great a heart is being destroyed by jealousy.

Very few tenors have ever been able to sing the role successfully and since the war these peculiar qualities of 'nobilmente'; heroic, clarion tone and musical intelligence have been sadly lacking in those who have attempted Otello.

The purpose of this article is to draw to the attention of readers those records which are worthy of Verdi's masterpiece and to attempt to illustrate on paper why this opera rates so highly in our esteem.

To begin, very properly, at the beginning, we have the Cypriots welcoming Otello home after his victory over the Turkish forces. With a bold stroke, Boito decided to scrap Act 1 of Shakespeare's play, with the exception of a couple of important speeches which he transferred to later in the opera. Instead, he takes the opening of Act 2 of the play.

From the opening cries of 'Una vela', to the entrance of Otello, Verdi maintains a dramatic intensity which sets the emotional scene for the opera immediately.

Otello's 'Esultate' - paean of joy, shows us the conquering hero at the height of his triumph. Although only 13 bars long, this really separates the men from the boys - operatically speaking.

Possibly the finest version is that of Giovanni Zenatello (DB 1007. reissue on Eterna 705). Recorded in 1927, when he was 51, this shows the superb trumpet-like voice exactly suited to the role, and gives us the entire scene with Granforte as Iago.

Among other fine versions is Tamagno's (DR100 reissue ORL 211). In spite of angina pectoris which was affecting him at this time. As the creator of the role, all records by Tamagno are worthy of the greatest consideration. Those who care to seek it out will also find a remarkable performance by Gigli on Eterna 732. This shows what the tenor might have done had he essayed the role. His policy of not straining the voice, which undoubtedly caused his remarkably long international career of over 40 years probably militated against this, however.

After the Esultate, Boito returns to Act 1 of Shakespeare's play and builds up the character of Iago, cumulatively in the shape and texture of the music. It is interesting to recall that Verdi originally meant to call the opera Iago to underline his different approach to the story. Iago is enraged by the promotion of Cassio over his head. He feels that his service in over a hundred battles entitles him to be Otello's right hand man. He seeks revenge on Otello for the unjust promotion and plies Cassio with drink, planning to discredit him by getting him drunk and then involving him in a brawl. What started out as a celebration party for the officers turns into a violent scuffle. Throughout Iago remains cool and level-headed, maliciously determined to blacken Cassio's name somehow.

Then follows one of the finest brindisi in all opera, both in the power of the descriptive music and the use of chorus to produce sinister laughs in the background. Of all the records made of this scene, that by Lawrence Tibbett is supreme. In 1939, when he was about 40, he made a set of excerpts from "Otello" with Martinelli and Jepson, of which more anon.

They have recently been reissued on VICII85, a superb long player. Tibbett was the ideal Iago. His magnificent dark voice was coupled with interpretative powers of the highest order. The sensuous legato and flexibility of voice is a combination never heard today in a young baritone. For those who would like to have another version as well, probably Stabile's on L. 1969 would suffice. Vocally inferior to Tibbett, he yet exudes charm (crocodile of course) and panache as Iago.

The scuffle brings Otello to the scene and when he sees that one of the officers, Montano, is wounded, he summarily dismisses Cassio from his service. Iago has scored his first success. Everyone disperses, and Desdemona greets her husband. Boito cleverly constructed a scene from Otello's speech from Act I of the play, when he tells the Duke of Venice about his early adventures among the cannibals, and his courtship of Desdemona. Boito transformed this into a duet between Otello and Desdemona which ends the first act of the opera. And what a duet!

It is the only love duet which Verdi wrote which is in no way imbued with a sense of urgency or restriction. Otello's opening words 'Gia nella notte densa' (Now in the dark night every noise is stilled) shows us Otello the poet in contrast to the triumphant warrior. Desdemona recounts to Otello how he described to her his adventures on the deserts and on the seas. The voices join for the first time on the words: 'per la mia pieta' (for my pity). Then Otello asks death to take him at the moment of ecstasy 'venga la morte', and Desdemona prays 'amen' that their loves will not change with the passing years. The duet is one beautiful phrase after another, and establishes a peace like no other that I know. Just before the end of the duet, Otello kisses Desdemona, and as he does so, the orchestra plays the kiss scene 'un bacio', which is used twice more in the opera, and is of great importance. Each time, it occurs at a moment of supreme passion in Otello's life.

When the roster of Tenors who have assumed the role of Otello is drawn up, that of Giovanni Martinelli will stand alone.

When he first sang Otello in 1937, he was over 50 years of age. His voice was still intact, however, and the musical intelligence which had always dominated it, had matured with the years. His performances in this opera with Tibbett and Elizabeth Rethberg at the Metropolitan from 1937 to 1940, and at Covent Garden in the 1937 Coronation Season rank as the high water-mark in the history of both theatres. Nothing like it had been seen before or indeed since. Martinelli recorded the love duet with Jepson on VIC II85, but he is let down by a pure-voiced but uninspired Desdemona. How different his stage performances were! There exists an off-the-air recording of the whole of Otello broadcast from the

Metropolitan in 1938. This is a unique historical document, since Martinelli (one cannot imagine why not!) did not record the opera entire. With Rethberg as his partner, he is superb in this duet. The clarion-like tones of his upper register ring out, yet he uses the most exquisite pianissimi. How subtly they differentitate the characters within the sensitivity of the music - the mature yet impetuous Otello, the serene and passionate Desdemona.

I shall refer to this recording later on. That great duo, Caruso and Farrar never made a recording of this scene. Yet one imagines how magnificent their performance would have been. Zenatello and Hina Spani give a fine performance on DB 1006, though only part of the duet is included, and so too do Pattiera and Sienemeyer on E 10816. What a wonderful Desdemona Sienemeyer was, and how sad that her death at an early age robbed us of many more years of her superb, haunting voice.

Act 2 begins with one of the greatest scenes in all opera. In the castle, Iago counsels Cassio to make Desdemona plead for his reinstatement. When he is alone he sings the famous 'Credo' in which he declares his ambition to destroy Otello and the ruthlessness with which he will pursue this end. This is Boito at his finest and the music which close the words is suitably declamatory. Iago is here the modern man, proclaiming nihilism - 'vien tanto dopo irrision la morte' (after so huge a mockery as life comes death.) Titta Ruffo gives probably the finest version on record. (2-052090). His voice - 'a miracle' as De Luca said - is ideal for this aria. He revels in the role, and takes delight in huge guffaws at the end, when Iago laughs at the Christian conception of Heaven. Tibbett again is superb, and Gobbi on DB 21071 only lacks power to make a real impression. No other modern Iago can, however, compare with him.

After this aria, there are two separate passages for Desdemona /Cypriots/Iago, in which Desdemona is given flowers by children, and another for Desdemona/Otello/Iago and Emilia, Desdemona's maid. Verdi here shows his mastery over choral passages which he perfected in his Requiem and second Shakespearian opera, Falstaff. None of the older recordings give any real satisfaction here and we have to turn to the modern LP performances to do the music justice. I will discuss the relevant recordings of these at the end of my article.

At the end of the quartet, Iago attempts to persuade Otello of Desdemona's fidelity. For the only time in the opera, until the last moment in fact, Otello despises Iago in an aria of renunciation.

Boito transferred the great speech from the play to a straight-forward farewell of arms - 'Ora e per sempre addio'. The musical expression reveals an Otello who is decided not perplexed.

Again, Martinelli's 'live' performance is unequalled, lending anguish to those terrible words which describe how jealousy has possessed Otello - 'M'hai legato alla croce' (you have bound me to the Cross). On commercial recordings Tamagno contributes a fine performance on ORL 211. This, and Caruso's on DA 561 seem to have been taken at a more leisurely tempo. Whether this is what Verdi demanded is unknown. I can only say that the faster tempo which Martinelli adopts seems to me to lend the necessary urgency and excitement to the scene. Zenatello was recorded live at Covent Garden in 1926 on DB 923. The voice is superb, and the atmosphere vividly captured.

Otello is roused to such a pitch that he turns on Iago, and flings him to the ground, demanding that he prove his insinuations. Iago realises his schemes are threatened, and describes a dream which he says Cassio had, while he slept beside him. In the dream, Cassio talked of his love for Desdemona and cursed the Moor for coming between them. The music Verdi gives Iago is wonderfully suggestive, set at a demanding tessitura with seven successive PP's!

The creator of Iago, Victor Maurel, recorded this aria in 1907, when he was over 60 years of age (Fonotipia 39042). Six years after Otello, Maurel created the new role of Falstaff for Verdi. Gobbi has a superb modern performance on DB 6626, faithfully following the score markings. This is the most subtle of all the recordings.

The passion of Iago seeps through Otello's mind, and to clinch the matter, Iago refers to the handkerchief which Otello gave Desdemona as a present, and which he says was in Cassio's hands. This convinces Otello of the truth of Iago's assertions and in music of relentless fury he pledges that he will revenge Desdemona's guilt. Iago joins with him in a wonderful duet which concludes Act 2. Never has Verdi written music more exciting than Otello's furious outburst. Jealousy ensnares his mind and makes him oblivious to anything else.

The live performance of Martinelli/Tibbett is again the best - Martinelli rending the heart with his cries of 'sangue sangue' (blood! blood!)

Frank Mullings, 'the only possible English Otello', combines well with Harold Williams on Columbia L 1604. Mullings made some other fine recordings of the love duet and death scene for Columbia. The funereal tempo adopted by the conductor spoils Zenatello and Granforte on DB 1007. It was sad to hear the late Sir John Barbirolli adopting the same pace in his recent complete recording. In all other matters relating to opera, Sir John was a model of good taste. Caruso and Ruffo on DK 114 have magnificent voices, but there is insufficient differentiation between the artists, and little real understanding of dramatic emphasis.

Act 3 opens with a confrontation between Otello and his wife who has come to plead for Cassio's reinstatement. When he asks her for the handkerchief which he gave her, she is unable to produce it, and her lack of explanation enrages him. Verdi put the scene in dramatic contrast to the earlier love duet. There is a wonderful moment, which Martinelli's live performance illustrates, where Otello borrows a pleading phrase used in total candour and honesty by Desdemona and turns it back to her with icy unbelieving courtesy. He escorts her to the door and forces her out on the words ('quella vil cortigiana che e la sposa d'Otello' (pardon me - I thought you were that vile whore who is Otello's wife!))

Otello is plunged into deepest dejection with the words 'Dio mi potevi scagliar'. Was there ever a cry from the heart more moving than this? 'O God, you might have heaped upon me all the ills of poverty, of shame'. Otello's monologue reveals how his sun has been quenched. The scene makes a heart-rending impression with a great artist. Zenatello's recording in 1929 was made with the wisdom of 20 years and over 500 performances behind him. (DB 953). It yields only to Martinelli in artistry. Other moving performances are those of Renato Zanelli (DB 1439 - reissue Club 99-41B), and Lauretz Melchior in German in 1927 (Reissue Asco LP 121). With limited vocal resources, similar to Ramon Vinay, Zanelli shows us Otello's soul in ruins. His early death followed most successful performances in the role at Covent Garden in 1930.

Iago succeeds in convincing Otello of Desdemona's unfaithfulness to him. He engages Cassio in banter about his girlfriend, Bianca. Otello is concealed behind a pillar and, hearing Cassio laughing, imagines that he is scoffing at him. When Cassio produces the handkerchief which an unknown hand had thrust into his the previous evening, Otello's mind is made up. The trio between the three men looks forward musically to "Falstaff". Toscanini's recording of this section of the opera is unsurpassed and absolutely faithful to Verdi's markings.

When Cassio leaves, Iago and Otello plot to kill Desdemona. They agree that Otello will smother her, while Iago disposes of Cassio. Otello also elects Iago as his Captain. The rest of the Act is taken up with the arrival of the Ambassador from Venice, who orders Otello to return to Venice, while Cassio is appointed Governor of Cyprus.



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JAY WHIDDEN RECORDINGS

by Steve Walker

Here is a listing of the Swedish issues by Jay Whidden, for which I am very grateful to Mr. Mats Elfstrom.

SPELAD AV JAY WHIDDEN OCH HANS ORKESTER (Från Carlton Hotel, London)

London, c. December, 1928.

- 5083 När Solen går ner, går Månen upp
(When the sun goes down, the moon goes up) Imperial X1009
- 5084? Det är någonting Spanskt över det hela
(There's something Spanish about the whole thing) Imperial X1008
- 5085-2 Fröken, tänk om vi träffats i Våras!
(Baby, think if we'd met before this spring) Imperial X1009
- 5086? Isabella, tänk på vad du gör
(Isabella, think of what you're doing) Imperial X1008

The following titles are thought to have orchestral accompaniment by the Jay Whidden Orch.
SJUNGEN AV KARL-MAGNUS THULSTRUP (Orkester Ackomp.)

London, c. January, 1929

- 5121-3 Madeleine Imperial X1011
- 5122-2 Som varje liten pärla Imperial X1012
- 5123
- 5124-2 Mor ur "Jazz Sångaren" Imperial X1010
- 5125-3 Ensam ur "Jazz Sångaren" - do -
- 5126-2 När liten Blir stor Imperial X1014
- 5127-2 Jungfrun på Jungfrusund Imperial X1011
- 5128 I varje hamm Imperial X1015
- 5129 Aftonstjärnan Imperial X1012
- 5130 Den tiden kommer aldrig åter Imperial X1015
- 5131 Två unga hjärtan Imperial X1014
- 5132-2 Fox trot: Optimister Ohoj Imperial X1013
- 5133
- 5134-2 Kom med så gå vi Imperial X1013

NOTE: 5132 as SPELAD AV IMPERIAL ORKESTERN med refrängsång av Karl-Magnus Thulstrup

SPELAD AV JAY WHIDDEN OCH HANS ORKESTER

London, c. May, 1929

- 5196-2 En Kärleksnatt i Barcelona (A night of love in Barcelona) Imperial X1021
- 5197-2 Österns Pärla (The Pearl of the East) -do-
- 5198-2 Ensam och titta på månen (Alone with the moon) Imperial X1020
- 5199 Du gav åt mig ett paradys på jorden (You gave me paradise) -do-

London, c. 12th. June, 1929

- 5247-2 Yola Imperial X1024
- 5248-2 Blott för dig (Just for you) -do-
- 5249 "Vem Vet?" Imperial X1025
- (2nd prize in Stockholm contest, "The Melodies of the Summer"
- 5250 Stockholm (1st prize in Stockholm contest, " " " Imperial X 1025
- London, c. November, 1929
- 5316 Svenska, Goodbye! Imperial X1026
- 5317 Lena Mine -do-

Note: Both the above are Jay Whidden compositions

In the presence of the Venetians, Otello strikes Desdemona, then falls in a swoon. When he is alone, Iago puts his foot on the body and shouts aloud 'Ecco il leone' (Here lies the lion)

Now comes the fourth and last act, set entirely in Desdemona's bed-chamber. By now she is nearly insane, and, thinking of madness, she remembers how her mother's maid had lost her lover and died of grief. Verdi's treatment of this scene is strikingly realistic. Only the dramatic cry at the end of the Willow Song breaks the simplicity. The song begins 'Piangea cantando nell'erma landi' (she wept singing on the lonely heath). The word 'salce' meaning a willow, is repeated often. One senses Boito was trying, successfully I feel, to add an impression of Ophelia to the scene. After Emilia, her maid and Iago's wife, is gone, she kneels before the image of the Virgin Mary and intones an exquisite 'Ave Maria'. For the length of melody and chaste quality of the music, no words are adequate.

Two sopranos in this role were outstanding - Elizabeth Rethberg and Nellie Melba. Rethberg on DB 1517 displays an exquisite silvery tone, with beautifully floated high notes. Toscanini considered her the finest of all sopranos, and certainly her assumption of the role of Desdemona justifies this. Melba on Victors 88148-9 has perfect purity and characterisation. When she sang the last act of the opera at her farewell to Covent Garden many years later in 1926, she could still display these qualities although she was over 60 at the time. The records made live of this performance illustrate this (reissued on HMV EP - 7ER 5201). For a good modern performance, Felicia Weathers on SXL 6299 has the right tone quality and sensuous legato for the role.

The violins end the prayer on a high A flat. Then the powers of darkness take over and double basses play their lowest string, as the sinister figure of Otello is seen, bent on murder. The last scenes are very true to Shakespeare, but whereas in his case it is the language that moves us as much as the situation, in the opera it is rightly the music which stirs us most profoundly. When Otello enters the bed-chamber, he kisses Desdemona three times, and she awakens. The kiss theme is here heard for the second time. Otello strangles her and sinks exhausted on the bed. A knocking is heard at the door, and Otello opens it to Emilia, who discovers the murder. At her cries, Cassio, Iago and other officers burst into the room. Emilia demands of Otello the reason for the murder. He says he knew Desdemona was unfaithful, because the handkerchief he gave her was in Cassio's hands. When he learns from Emilia that it was stolen from her and put in Cassio's house, he realises how he has been tricked. Although hemmed in, he seizes his sword from the table, and defies anyone present to take it from him. In the inner despair of finality he sings - 'nium mi tema' (Let no one fear me though I am armed - this is journey's end).

In his live performance, Martinelli brings out the true nobility of Otello's character. Zenatello, on both his live recordings of 1926 (VB 8) and the 1929 studio one (DB 1362) is wonderfully moving. So too are Melchior and Zanelli, with Vinay the finest modern performance in the complete recording.

The death scene reveals the warrior who has the courage to realise that jealousy has destroyed the only thing in life which really mattered to him. He stabs himself, and the music of the kiss theme is heard for the last time, as he kisses Desdemona and dies.

Otello has regained his former stature. In death as in life, 'amor vincit omnia'.

NOTE ON COMPLETE RECORDINGS

3 outstanding ones -

(A) Toscanini/NBC. Orchestra: - Vinay/Nelli/Valdengo.

RB - 16093-5

(B) Von Karajan/VPO: - Del Monaco/Tebaldi/Protti.

Set 209 - 11.

(C) Serafin/Rome Opera:- Vickers/Rysanek/Gobbi.

INDS 6155

(A) is probably still the best version, some 23 years after it was made. Vinay is limited vocally, but has a deep understanding of the role, and is backed up by Valdengo and Nelli both in good voice and characterisation. Toscanini, need it be said, knows this music better than anyone else.

(B) is principally notable for beautiful orchestral playing, and the serene Desdemona of Tebaldi.

(C) again has a conductor imbued with the score and, of course, Gobbi as the outstanding Iago of today. Vickers is not my idea of an Otello, but he does contribute a beautiful Love Duet.

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To illustrate this article a picture of Francesco Tamagno appears on page 150, Nellie Melba on Page 151, Giovanni Zenatello on page 152, Giovanni Martinelli on Page 173, and Geraldine Farrar on page 174.

THE REVELERS by Quentin Riggs.

I began this article about the Revelers, one of the most popular of all male singing ensembles, several months ago but various circumstances have combined to delay its prompt completion. I had intended to dedicate it to the group's organizer, manager and basso, Wilfred Glenn, but now the article must be considered, instead, a modest memorial and a sincere tribute to a fine man and a great artist. I have just learned that my good friend "Bill" Glenn passed away at his home in Charlottesville, Virginia on the morning of June 26, 1970 at the age of 89 years, two months and six days.

Glenn was rightly proud of his many important achievements in the world of music, and in this article I would like to document the history of the Revelers, a group he organized, managed and sang with during its long and very successful period of activity.

For record collectors who enjoy quartet singing there has been a wealth of good material issued on discs and cylinders from the very beginning of recordings and performed by some of the finest artists of the period. The American (Premier) Quartet was unexcelled in its singing of comic and ragtime songs, and the Peerless Quartet certainly lived up to its name in its interpretations of popular and sentimental songs. Another ensemble which, in its heyday, was just as popular as the American and Peerless Quartets had been in their time and which, as far as I know, was active longer than any other quartet in phonograph history, was the Revelers. It was organized in 1917 as the Shannon Four and was finally disbanded 37 years later when Wilfred Glenn retired in 1954.

The history of the Revelers began in 1917 when Glenn was asked by the Victor Talking Machine Company to organize a new male quartet. I am not absolutely certain why Victor wanted another quartet, but the most likely answer is that it was intended to replace the Orpheus Quartet. Harry Macdonough, the second tenor of the Orpheus group, was keeping busy with his duties as recording manager of the Victor Company and he was evidently losing interest in his singing activities, which he gave up entirely about three years later. William F. Hooley, the Orpheus's bass, had been in ill health for some time and he had only about one more year to live. He died on October 12, 1918 at the age of 57. The quartet's baritone, Reinald Werrenrath, had up to that time been one of the most active singers in Victor's various ensembles such as the Trinity Choir, the Light Opera Company, the Male Chorus, etc. However, he was becoming increasingly busy with operatic appearances and

concerts, and about this time his activities as an ensemble singer began to decrease considerably. In view of these problems, it is likely that Victor could foresee the dissolution of the Orpheus Quartet in the near future and wanted another group to take its place.

Glenn chose Charles Hart, who was comparatively new to recording work, as first tenor in the new quartet. The second tenor was Harvey Hindermeyer, an established phonograph singer who had been recording for several years. It was Hindermeyer who was instrumental in bringing the baritone, Elliott Shaw, into the group, as Shaw himself told me during a recent visit. At that time they were singing together at a large New York church. Hindermeyer told Shaw that Victor was organizing a new quartet and invited him to go with him to Camden for an audition. Shaw recalls that they made two test recordings, after which a pleased and satisfied Glenn said with an air of finality, "That's it!" And the Revelers was born, although it was not called by that name until several years later. When the question of a name for the new quartet arose, Glenn said: "We'll call it the Shannon Four! That'll get the Irish customers!".

The Shannon Four was not as popular during its early years as the American and Peerless Quartets, the reason for which was probably that it lacked a strong and distinctive lead singer that listeners could immediately recognize. The American Quartet had Billy Murray while the Peerless Quartet had Henry Burr, and those two singers instilled a personality of a particular character into their group's interpretations.

A year later Lewis James, a newcomer to the recording business, replaced Hindermeyer as second tenor, and it was this group that made hundreds of records, of all kinds of music, for most of the American record companies for the next 7 years. During this period they also recorded under a good many other names such as the Gounod Qt., the Acme Qt., Lyric Male Qt., Aeolian Qt., Vocalion Qt., Cathedral Qt., etc. The boys were also the backbone of such groups as the Brunswick Light Opera Co., Victor Male Chorus, Aeolian Light Opera Co., Trinity Choir, Victor Light Opera Co., and Victor Mixed Chorus. When a trio was required - it was sometimes Hart, James and Shaw and other times Hart, Shaw and Glenn - they were called the Crescent Trio, Apollo Trio, Orpheus Trio, etc.

While, "officially", the personnel of the group from 1918 to 1925 was Hart, James, Shaw and Glenn, it did vary from time to time. I have several records on which Charles Harrison sang in place of James, and on a few Okeh records Sam Ash, the sweet-voiced vaudeville tenor, sang the lead part (in these cases, the label showed the artists as Sam Ash and the Crescent Trio). For a while, during the early 1920's, Billy Jones (of Jones and Hare, "The Happiness Boys") sang on many occasions with the group on Brunswick records. Jones's distinctive style was ideal for quartet singing, and I believe that, if he had been engaged as second tenor of the group in the beginning, the quartet would have achieved a success and popularity nearly equal to that of the American and Peerless Quartets.

In addition to their recording activities, the Shannon Four kept busy with concerts and tours during the early 1920's, including one tour with Ada Jones. The popular comedienne, who was born in Oldham, Lancs, on June 1, 1873, died while on another tour in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, on May 2, 1922.

The quartet got an early start in the medium of radio, which was later to bring them a new audience and increased popularity for many years. It is said that they took part in the first live broadcast from the New York area, which must have been around 1920.

During the mid-1920s popular music in America began to experience a subtle change, of which Wilfred Glenn was aware. When I visited Glenn last year he told me that early in 1925 he began to feel dissatisfied with the type of songs the quartet was being asked to sing. They preferred to sing the current popular songs, but more and more they were asked to record the old standard numbers such as "Louisiana Lou", "By the Watermelon Vine", "Red

Wing", "Kentucky Babe", and "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny". It was then that the concept of a different type of arrangement for male quartet began to form in Glenn's mind. Charles Hart had dropped out of the group in 1924 and his place had been taken by a young tenor named Franklyn Baur who had ideas similar to Glenn's regarding a new style of quartet singing. Clifford Cairns, Victor's recording manager, thought it was a good idea and suggested that, since they would be singing songs in an informal, jazzy style they should have an appropriate name, and suggested "The Revelers".

The first songs the new ensemble recorded were "Just a Bundle of Sunshine" and "Every Sunday Afternoon", which they made for Victor in July 1925. At the same time they recorded the latter song for Columbia, but they were still called the Shannon Quartet on the label. However, someone soon came up with another name for the "new" quartet, and from that time on they were called the Singing Sophomores on Columbia, and the Merrymakers on Brunswick.

Ed Smalle, who died last year at the age of 80, was a very talented singer pianist and arranger, and he contributed a great deal to the success of the Revelers. During 1925 and 1926 Smalle was the group's arranger and accompanist, and he also sang with them, interspersing jazzy sound and effects into the songs. He was responsible for some of the Reveler's greatest hits of that period, such as "Nola", "Dinah", "Old Man River", "Breezing Along with the Breeze" and "Birth of the Blues".

During this period the boys took part in a good many dance band records on which their names were not shown and, personally, I believe that these were among the best records they made. They gave an excellent rendition of "Show Me the Way To Go Home" with Nat Shilkret's Orchestra and their performance on Shilkret's record of "The More We Are Together" is really hilarious! Billy Murray joined them to sing, with Paul Whiteman's Orchestra, "Just a Little Drink", which is a real masterpiece!

The year 1926 was an important one for the Revelers. They were among the first to obtain a contract with the newly-organized National Broadcasting Company, and that same year they made their first concert tour of Europe, where they were just as big a success as they were in the U.S. In London they appeared at the Palladium, The Prince's Cafe, the Silver Slipper Night Club and the Bath Club. They also took part in a Command Performance before the Royal Family and learned that the Prince of Wales was one of their most enthusiastic and ardent fans. They later had dinner with the Royal Family and were told by the Prince that his favourite record was their version of "The Birth of the Blues".

In the autumn of 1926 Ed Smalle ceased to be the quartet's arranger and accompanist, although he continued to sing with them for a short time. He was replaced by Frank Black, a talented and distinguished pianist, arranger, composer and conductor.

Franklyn Baur also dropped out of the group late in 1926, and in only about five more years he was to drop out of the musical world altogether because of an unfortunate combination of circumstances which his associate, Elliott Shaw, calls a real tragedy. People who knew and worked with Baur agree that he was not a great singer - rather he was a good "stylist". His voice was a small one, but he knew how to use it to advantage and it was ideal for quartet work. Baur's associates also agree that he was inclined to be rather stubborn on occasion, and it was this characteristic that contributed to the premature end of his career. He was the first soloist on the very popular "Voice of Firestone" radio program and he was paid \$1000 a performance, an amazing figure for those days! The Firestone Company was planning a large banquet for a good many of its dealers from all over the country, and Baur was asked to sing for the gathering. His agent suggested that it would be a nice gesture if he would donate his services on this one occasion, but Baur insisted that he would sing only if he received his regular fee of \$1000. This information was passed on to the Firestone management, who

declined to renew Baur's contract when it expired and who replaced him on the program with Richard Crooks. Although Baur regretted the loss of his Firestone contract he felt that he was destined for better things, anyway. In spite of the limited power of his voice, he had operatic aspirations and he decided that the time was ripe to get on with further studies with a view to moving into opera. He went to Europe to study for one year, and upon his return to New York he planned a recital at Carnegie Hall. The most important music critics in New York attended the recital and Baur hoped that great things would result from his American debut as a concert artist. However, the recital was a failure, and in despair Baur retired from public life when he was only in his mid-20's. His voice was ideal for light music, and his fellow Revelers agree that he was a great asset to the quartet, but his lofty ambitions ultimately ruined his career.

After Baur left the Revelers around Christmas 1926, he was replaced on records by Charles Harrison, who had sung occasionally with the Shannon Quartet several years earlier. Perhaps Harrison's return to the group was brought on by an incident which Wilfred Glenn told me last year. Lewis James was susceptible to attacks of claustrophobia, which eventually forced him to give up singing. On one occasion when the quartet was gathered at the radio studio for a broadcast, James had an attack and was unable to carry one. It was only a few minutes before broadcast time when someone recalled seeing Charles Harrison sitting in the hall. They rushed him into the studio and hurriedly rehearsed a couple of songs just before going on the air. After the broadcast Glenn was told that the program's sponsor wanted to speak with him on the telephone. His first thought was that the sponsor had noticed something different and intended to complain about it. He was surprised and amused when he was asked: "What happened tonight? I've never heard you sing better."

Harrison sang with the Revelers on records, and presumably on radio, during most of 1927, but he did not go with them on their European tour of that year. For the tour they engaged a young farm boy from Kansas named Frank Luther who, during the past 35 years, has enjoyed a successful career in producing and making recordings for children. Luther toured with them only one time and only made one record with them, "C'est Vous" and "Dawn of Tomorrow" which they recorded on September 23, 1927 as the Victor Salon Group.

Incidentally, I would like to acknowledge the great amount of valuable information I have obtained during the preparation of this article from the most recent publication of my good friend, Brian Rust, "The Victor Master Book, Vol. 2". For example, for years I have known that Ed Smalle was the Revelers' accompanist, that Frank Luther sang with them for a short time and that, during the mid-1930s, Frank Parker and Robert Simmons were members of the group. However, I was not sure about the exact dates, and the singers themselves, after so many years, were rather uncertain about details. With the aid of Brian's book, one is able to determine the quartet's personnel at every recording session and to pinpoint their activities during this period with a great deal of accuracy.

Late in 1927 Wilfred Glenn heard about a 23-year-old fellow from Georgia who was said to have a good voice and who was then playing the saxophone in the Roxy Theatre orchestra. He was James Melton, who was to be the Revelers' first tenor for the next six years and who later became tenor of the Metropolitan Opera Company. His first recording with the Revelers was "Nola", a vocal arrangement of Felix Arndt's well-known piano solo. It was recorded November 18, 1927 and was one of the group's most popular and requested songs. It stayed in their repertoire and was performed regularly until the quartet was dissolved in 1954.

The Revelers continued to make annual European tours, during which they recorded for various European companies, and in 1929 they began making regular tours of the United States. Between tours they took part in some of the most popular radio programs of the late 1920's and early 1930's such as the Palmolive Hour and the Cities Service Program, one of the longest-

running programs in radio history. In the early radio days the programs were sponsored, but no commercial messages were allowed. Consequently, the sponsors had to devise other means to keep the name of their product before the public. For example, when Billy Jones and Ernest Hare were sponsored by the Interwoven Hosiery Company they called themselves "The Interwoven Pair" and when their sponsor was the Happiness Candy Company they were known as "The Happiness Boys". Olive Kline, the famous concert soprano and Victor recording artist was a regular performer along with Guy Lombardo's Orchestra, on a program sponsored by the makers of La Palina cigars. She was disguised as a Spanish senorita and given the sobriquet of "Miss La Palina"! On the Palmolive Hour the two soloists, Virginia Rea and Frank Munn, were called "Olive Palmer" and Paul Oliver", while the Revelers were called "The Palmolive Quartet".

Elliott Shaw once said that "Wilfred Glenn is the Revelers!" And it's true that from the beginning of the Shannon Four in 1917 until the dissolution of the Revelers in 1954, Glenn guided and managed the group as well as sang with it from the beginning to the end. However, Shaw deserves mention as the man who holds the record for long-standing membership in the Revelers - next to Glenn, of course. He sang with them on every record and in every concert and radio appearance between 1917 and 1937, with one exception. He dropped out for a period of 14 months, and between July 1931 and September 1932 his place was taken by Phil Duey, who had sung dozens of vocal refrains on dance band records during the late 1920's, mostly in a trio with Jack Parker and Frank Luther. Duey later had a successful career as a concert and radio soloist, singing on some of the most popular radio programs of the 1930's. Duey whom Lewis James described as "a studious chap", began his graduate studies in 1939 at Columbia University, where he earned his M.A. and Ph.D. in Musicology. Since 1947 he has been head of the Voice department at the University of Michigan. His academic career has obviously been just as distinguished as his earlier radio and concert career had been.

The great worldwide depression which began in 1929 seriously affected the recording industry, but its effects were not so extreme in the beginning as they were three or four years later. It was at this unfortunate time that Victor began to issue a series of long-playing records, which required an attachment on the phonograph to enable it to play at a speed of 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm. A special demonstration record was made for dealers featuring Frank Crumit as Master of Ceremonies, who explained the advantages and merits of the new LP records. Also featured were the Revelers, who sang "When Yuba Plays the Rumba on the Tuba" and the two-piano team of Victor Arden and Phil Ohman. From a business standpoint, 1932 and 1933 were the worst years in phonograph history, and the new LPs did not catch on with the general public. In 1936 there was an impressive list of LPs by many well-known artists, dance bands and symphony orchestras, but by 1941 the list had dwindled to a few instrumental records designed for use in church services.

Vocalists suffered from the decline in record sales in the early 1930's, and although the Revelers had been recording regularly up to that time in 1931 their activities decreased substantially. On January 26, 1931 they recorded "Lady Play Your Mandolin" and "Blue Again". They did not record again until July 7, 1931, when they did "Dancing in the Dark" and "When Yuba plays the Rumba on the Tuba". And that was the last recording they did until 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ years later. In January 1934 they recorded four songs for Victor, none of which were issued. By that time Frank Parker had replaced James Melton as first tenor, but he stayed with the group only about a year. In 1935 he was replaced by Robert Simmons, the husband of Patti Pickens of the Pickens Sisters, a famous female trio who sang with Paul Whiteman's Orchestra during the early 1930's. In spite of the absence of Revelers recordings during the 1930's they sang regularly on some of the top radio programs of the period and continued their annual concert tours.

Elliot Shaw, who had sung with the quartet since 1917, left the group around 1937 and was replaced by the still-active baritone, John Herrick. Shaw continued to sing on radio and in concerts for about two more years, then retired altogether in 1939. The last recording the Revelers did was a series of hymns which they made for Decca in the late 1930's, but they remained active in concert and radio work until 1942.

By 1944 James Melton was a famous opera, concert and radio star, and in that year he invited his former associates to join him on one of his weekly broadcasts, on which they revived "Ol' Man River", "Nola", and several other early Revelers successes. By then Elliott Shaw had retired and Lewis James was a producer at a Chicago radio station. After that 1944 broadcast neither Shaw nor James sang again professionally.

Although Wilfred Glenn was the oldest member of the group, he had no intentions of retiring. He reorganized the Revelers in 1947, choosing three talented but comparatively unknown artists to sing with him. There were various changes of personnel from 1947 to 1954, but Glenn toured the country every year with the quartet, singing the songs and arrangements that had made the Revelers the most famous male quartet of its day. In 1954, at the age of 74, Wilfred Glenn finally dissolved the world-famous Revelers and retired to a farm in Virginia.

It should not be only for the great pleasure that they have given the world through their unique style of singing that the Revelers, and particularly Glenn, should be remembered. He gave a lot of young singers an opportunity to gain invaluable experience with the quartet which enabled them to go on to brilliant careers in other fields. James Melton, after singing with the quartet for six years, became a Metropolitan Opera Star, as did several others who sang with the group during its 1947-54 period.

It was a talented and remarkable ensemble and it played an important part in the world of music for many years. The Revelers are no more, but fortunately they have left a legacy of thousands of recordings displaying some of the finest male quartet singing ever put onto wax.

My illustrations appear on pages 175 and 176.

KRISTALL by Mats Elfström

There is a label that is practically unknown abroad - judging by those discographies I have seen - and that is Swedish "Kristall". Still it was not a small label as nearly 900 different numbers were issued and most of them were foreign recordings.

In 1933 when the "Kristall" label appeared for the first time as a Swedish label. The Sonora company had just started to make recordings and pressings. Much of its earliest catalogue originated from various independent labels, such as Tri-Ergon and Artiphon in Germany and Sterno in Britain. Sonora's contact with the Crystalate Gramophone Record Manufacturing Co. Ltd. resulted in release of a few of their masters in Sonora's regular series and in the start of two series of Kristall issued. In the K.3001 series sixteen(?) records of Jack Payne appeared, and in the K.3501 series various British, German and American recordings appeared, the British being The Commodore Grand Orchestra, Jay Wilbur, Charlie Palloy, Roma's Accordeon Band and Harry Leader's Orchestra. The highest number seems to be K.3519. These two series had the label design shown by the first illustration.

The same year a small music company in Örebro began issuing Kristall records in a series of its own starting at 101. These records, as well as those sold by Sonora, were manufactured in Germany probably by German Kristall. In this new series almost 20

different records were issued. The masters came from Kristall (G), the Perfect group (US) and Imperial (E). The British recordings were mostly by Jack Payne and Jay Wilbur.

Early in 1934 "Svenska Kristall-Rex" was founded and obtained sole proprietors' rights of Kristall for Sweden. They continued the 101-series and discontinued the other two. They took masters from Imperial (G), Broadcast (E), Rex (E) and French Kristal (Crystal) as well as from those sources mentioned earlier, and they started a 1201-series with local recordings though foreign appeared a couple of times. The British artist gallery was enlarged with Froise Mandoliers, George van Dusen, Primo Scala and a few others.

After a year, early in 1935, Svenska Kristall-Rex closed and Nils Mattsson & Co. took over the rights. The 101-series had then reached ca 200 (195?) and the 1201-series ca 1240. The later series had a short life. In spring 1935 it was terminated at 1267 and recordings of Swedish artists were afterwards released in a 1600-series. In August 1937 Carl Lindstrom AG, Berlin, bought Kristall Schallplatten GmbH but the Mattsson Co. was allowed to continue releasing Kristall records. The number series however were altered to fit the many number series of the Lindstrom companies. The 101-series stopped (at 458) and instead a Sv 25001-series appeared. The 1601-series (at 1741) got a "Sv" prefix and continued. For two more years Kristall records were issued. In summer 1939 the last records came, the Sv 25001-series was at Sv 25112 and the Sv 1741 series at Sv 1806. Many British recordings were used. Artists with more than five records released on Swedish Kristall include Larry Adler, Casani Club Orchestra, van Dusen, Reginald Dixon, Billy Cotton, Freddy Gardner, Charlie Kunz, Brian Lawrence, Jack Payne, Primo Scala and Jay Wilbur. The second illustration shows a label from this last series.

It can be noted that Kristall records in a 100-series were also issued in Finland but they contained only Finnish recordings in a master series prefixed K-Fi. They started in 1941 when Swedish Kristall was out of the market.

My illustrations are on the front cover, P.149.

I have made a label list of Kristall (Sd) but it contains many blank numbers and I feel it is far from being ready for publication. Still I welcome contacts with discographers and collectors who can help me to obtain recording dates and locations and non-Swedish issue numbers in exchange for information about Swedish issues. The notes I have are very detailed. My address: Knallv. 10, S-616 00 Aby, Sweden.

----- AN ANNOUNCEMENT

It is hoped that the first major discography to be concerned with British Dance Bands will be ready by the end of the year or early next. It will contain the fullest details possible on all the big names in the British dance band world - now alas, a matter of some memories, some photographs and many records, and the latter will be listed in the main part of the book - probably something like 800 pages!

In this I have had the expert assistance of Edward and Steve Walker, Alasdair Fenton and Geoff Milne. What a team! Can YOU afford NOT to have a book like that?

Send no money yet, but as this is a limited edition, I will need to have some idea of how many copies will be required. If you will need one - and you will if you are at all interested in British Dance Bands from 1912 to 1942 - please write requesting reservation. The price will depend upon what sort of response I receive to this announcement. Watch 'The Talking Machine Review' for further news. But write NOW to Brian A. L. Rust, 38 Grimsdyke Road, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 4PW.

(Editor's note: I do advise all interested to write to Mr. Rust immediately. I am repeatedly being asked where his previous discographical publications may be obtained. They were all limited editions and sold out within a very short time, as the disappointed will confirm. Nobody will regret purchasing a book published by Mr. Rust for they are always packed with much useful recording data).

LAMBERT RESEARCH PROJECT.

I am currently working on a complete list of American Lambert cylinder records. These are frequently pink in color, but may also be brown, black, and even blue. They come in two sizes - the standard 2" and the Concert size (5"). The titles and number are usually printed or embossed on the flat rim, and the number is almost always written in pencil inside the cylinder near the opposite end. I need to know the title, artist and number. Frequently, the announcement will be somewhat more complete than the printed title, so be sure to copy down all pertinent information. Information is especially needed for numbers below 500. When the project is completed in a few months, the list will be announced in these pages. Thank you for your help in advance. Allen Koenigsberg, 1532 Ocean Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230, U.S.A.

EDITORIAL

The Editor takes time off to try to remember all the odd items which he wrote on the backs of various envelopes and subsequently lost!

My niece had a holiday in France and returned with some purchases wrapped in a copy of "France - Soir" of 4th July, 1970, in which was announced the death on 25th June of Mlle. Alice Cocea whose recordings alone and duets with stars like Maurice Chevalier one finds on chestnut-labelled Pathé. She was 71. She was one of the 'creator' stars in such shows as "Phi-Phi", "Les Parents Terribles", "Le Scandale A Deauville", etc. She also made films.

Your Editor is not a dealer for the items of various advertisers whose items or leaflets appear in/with The Talking Machine Review. He handles only those things bearing his address. Also, if an advertisement states a geographic limitation, for example, available in The British Isles only, this is precisely what it means! This may be imposed for postal, banking, or other legitimate reasons.

Anyone contemplating dealing with Mr. James Gladstone, whose last known addresses were in parts of the New York City area, is advised to contact the Editor first.

The illustrations in this issue of Madame Nellie Melba and Miss Geraldine Farrar were copied by your Editor from illustrations in a Gramophone & Typewriter Company catalogue of 1903-4. The catalogue pictures were only three-inches tall. The pictures of Zenatello and Tamagno were reprinted from "Opera at Home" and that of Martinelli is from "A Catalogue of Music by International Artistes". All are by the courtesy of E.M.I. Ltd.

The illustrations for Mr. Riggs' article were given to him by some of the artistes therein depicted.

Be patient correspondents!!!! I was away from home about ten days at the latter part of August and beginning of September, during which time eighty-nine letters accumulated. I am trying to catch up, but as is obvious, this magazine has been prepared since that date, causing a further accumulation of letters. At the appropriate time, the preparation

of the magazine has to take precedence over correspondence because the majority is thus kept happy.

It is always flattering and gratifying to receive letters saying how much you enjoy receiving the magazine. Many would like to see it appear more often. At present, a more regular appearance is impossible because I do earn my "bread and butter" during the daytime. However, it is not beyond the realms of possibility to achieve a bigger magazine. This could be done by more economic production - meaning, once the printing begins, it is just as easy to run off 2,000 as it is 1,000, because there is a certain time taken by typing, setting-up, checking, which once performed remain the same no matter how many copies result. You can serve yourselves beneficially by persuading others to become subscribers. As this is a non-profit venture, each reader would gain ultimately in the magazine he receives. I need hardly remind you that we also require articles with which to fill the pages. The remedy is in your own hands. You might know of a non-subscriber unlikely to become one, but who might like to write an article.

Philatelic Corner. To reply to some queries in one swoop ... Overseas readers interested in obtaining/or knowing about British stamps should write to The Manager, British Post Office Philatelic Bureau, 2 - 4 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh EH1 1AB. The Bureau also issue an interesting monthly coloured 'Philatelic Bulletin' of which the annual subscription is 7s. 6d.

As I type these notes, the production of the 1890 book by Mr. Lewis Young is going ahead, and if I am unable to insert a notice about it in the advertising pages, which are usually printed last of all, it will definitely be ready by the time the December issue is circulated.

It was Mr. W. A. Minnick of Massachusetts who contributed the article from "The Youth's Companion" of 1878 in the August issue, on page 137. His next contribution is being held over while the printer prepares the little illustrations for reproduction.

THOSE INTERESTED IN PRE-REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIAN SINGERS should look out for the new book by I.V. Nestyev called (in English) "Stars of our Scene", dealing with Panina, Vialtzeva and Plevichkaya. With it come two little 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m. thin plastic records, of early recordings by these singers - all for 99 kopeks. This must be a brief notice as we have only just received a copy. The records are excellently recorded even though they look just like floppy Berliner discs! Those interested are advised to contact their "agents" quickly as some Soviet publications are very quickly sold out.

Also received is a set of three twelve-inch L.P. records, being the second set devoted to operatic selections recorded in the "acoustic days". (There have been sets devoted solely to Sobinov, Chaliapin, Neshdanova, etc. but I refer here to what will be an "anthology" series). This present set contains recordings by N. Figner, M. Figner, Labinsky, Sibiriakov, Damaev, Smirnov, Bocharov, Zbrujeva, Maksakov, Litvin, Nikitina, Davidov, Lipkovskaya, etc. This is a convenient way of collecting examples by such singers for Russian G & T's and 'early Dogs' etc. are difficult to find. The set is Melodiya D026237 - D026242. While the reproduction is satisfactory, I am biased in that I do not like to hear acoustic records reproduced in the modern style. That is, with an echo and distance which gives the impression that the singer is placed at the other end of a long railway tunnel. I still prefer to hear solo singers sound as if they are close to the recording horn or microphone performing just for me. I feel that recordings should flatter the listener in this way. I dislike being given the impression that I am sitting in the highest gallery of an empty theatre. Mr. Paul Voigt, the recording-genius of Edison Bell who was in advance

of his time, used to say he wanted to create the impression that there was a hole in the wall of one's music room and the artiste stood there giving a "command performance" for the listener alone. He was right ... and I have digressed from the original theme that this set of Soviet records (manufactured in the old home of Riga incidentally) is worth having if Russian singers is your interest.

I have still not heard from the unidentified person who sent any anonymous subscription from Chelmsford, Essex, who also frequents Braintree.

Berliner records. Details of Berliner records are still required. If you have not already done so please send details of any you may have to Mr. E. Bayly, 19 Glendale Road, Bournemouth. BH6 4JA, England; or to, Mr. P. Charosh, 60 Clarkson Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11226, U.S.A.

In addition to catalogue number, artiste and title, please add any recording date, matrix or other number impressed upon the disc. Also include "London", "Milan", etc. if that is shown also.

A discography of British dance bands. Elsewhere in this issue you will see a notice of the impending publication of such a book, which is now in preparation. If you are at all interested in the subject; or if you are interested in knowing about every type of record; or if you are building up your own private library; or if you are employed as a librarian - you should support the venture. Any "discography" published by Mr. Brian Rust never disappoints the purchaser. It is always a mine of information. His discographies are limited editions and always sell out completely - fast. During the past year I have received many letters from collectors wishing to know where they might purchase his previous publications. The reply is either, "you cannot", or "you might stand the remote chance of a copy if someone sells up his collection". This time you are being given fair notice well in advance, I need say no more! Shop owners or dealers might wish to order several.

We have heard from Christie's, the famous London auctioneers of quality that they will be holding a sale of "important and rare" musical boxes, automata, toys, dolls, fans, costumes on Tuesday and Wednesday 20/21st October. The Musical Boxes, amounting to over 100 lots will be sold on the Tuesday commencing at 10.30 a.m. precisely. From their notes I see many makes of 'boxes', singing birds, and rare automata mentioned. These may be viewed on the Friday and Monday prior to the sale. Catalogues 4s. from Catalogue Dept., Christies, 8 King Street, London S.W.1.

THE CAREER OF HOWARD JACOBS by Steve Walker.

Howard Jacob's grandfather was Freeman Sanborn, the first man in America to play the saxophone in public; he died in December, 1931 aged 87. His daughter toured the United States as a saxophone soloist, and subsequently became Mrs. Stephen B. Jacobs, and mother of Howard, who hence is the third generation of saxophone players. He was born in Dedham, Massachusetts, in 1900. As a youth he studied the piano and gave classical recitals, later studied the saxophone.

For convenience, I now tabulate Howard Jacob's subsequent career:

1922 - HJ arrives in England.

1924-5 Leader of The Boston Orchestra at the Savoy Hotel.

April, 1927 - becomes joint leader of the Sylvians with Ramon Newton; at the Savoy and Berkeley Hotels (NOTE: to explain the situation of the Savoy bands: the Sylvians were the resident combination at the Berkeley, but were often employed as relief band to the resident bands at the Savoy - firstly the Orpheans and the Havana Band, subsequently Fred Elizalde and Reggie Batten).

November, 1928 - still at the Berkeley with a band known as Howard Jacob's Berkeley Hotel Orchestra - probably the Sylvians.

December, 1929 - still at the Berkeley with the Sylvians.

January, 1930 - goes to America.

October, 1930 - Returns to England, opens with an orchestra at Claridges'.

August, 1931 - HJ becomes Co-Director of the Savoy Hotel Orpheans with Carroll Gibbons.
 (NOTE: the correct and only title of this band is (Carroll Gibbons and) The Savoy HOTEL Orpheans. The New Savoy Orpheans were a totally different band, formed by Reggie Batten when the original Savoy Orpheans broke up in December, 1927; this Batten band lasted from 1 January, 1928 to 30 September, 1928 only).

July, 1932 - HJ leaves the Savoy Hotel Orpheans and forms his own band at the Berkeley. It is significant that the S.H.O. do not record at all the following month, and subsequently appear as Carroll Gibbons and HIS S.H.O.

3 March, 1933 - HJ finishes at the Berkeley.

29 July, 1933 - reopens at the Berkeley.

October, 1933 - at D.A.M.S. Club.

19 February, 1934 - opens at the Cafe Anglais.

1935 - at the Cafe de Paris, the Carlton, and reputedly the Savoy.

13 March, 1936 - leaves for Australia to become MD of the official dance band of the Australian Broadcasting Commission.

27 October, 1937 - HJ must be back in London since he broadcasts from the London studios with a London combination on this date.

December, 1937 - gives up bandleading and goes into variety as a solo act.
 I cannot offer any subsequent information.

THE RECORDINGS OF HOWARD JACOBS by Steve Walker

NB - I am not suggesting that Howard Jacobs solos on every one of these discs, but he is certainly present on them all.

with THE BOSTON ORCHESTRA - probably his first recordings.

HMV B1977	Unfortunate Blues	rec. January 31st, 1925.
HMV B1964	Nola	-do-
-do-	Mamma's Gone	-do-

with THE SYLVIANs at the Savoy Hotel, London

I doubt if Howard Jacobs is on any earlier Sylvians records.

HMV B5271	I need lovin'/Someday	April, 1927
B5285	Sing a little love song/I've got a wonderful girl	-do-
B5286	C'est vous	-do-
B5288	So blue	-do-
B5305	Bandy Bandolero/Little Jack Horner	June, 1927
B5306	Honolulu Moon/Love is just a little bit of Heaven	-do-
B5308	The More I see of Molly O'Moore	-do-
(Howard Jacobs is not present on the reverse of B5308)		
B5341	Lonely	-do-
B5381	Sugar/Vo-do-de-o Blues	October, 1927
B5382	Every morn, every noon, every night	-do-
B5386	You won't see me if I see you	September, 1927

Edison Phonograph Monthly, March 1912

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with constant needle-changing, and the comfort of a subdued volume of sound, that does not carry beyond your own little family circle. The wonderful, sensitive, wax cylinders, the silent, long-running motor, the long-playing Amberol Records, the permanent sapphire reproducing point, and the means of making and reproducing your own records, are all exclusive Edison Phonograph features. Remember this when you make your purchase.

Edison Standard Records, **35c.** Edison Amberol Records (play twice as long), **50c.** Edison Grand Opera Records, **75c. to \$2.00.**

We regret that owing to a typist's error this page was mislaid from the original copy.

HOWARD JACOBS with THE SAVOY HOTEL ORPHEANS

(on Columbia)

CB403	You're the kind of baby for me	January 21, 1932
CB403	All my life	January 7, 1932
CB404	You'll be sorry	-do-
CB405	Cuban love songs / Put your little arms around me	January 12, 1932
CB404	Sweet summer breeze	December 31, 1931
CB407	Dancing in the dark / Have you forgotten so soon?	January 16, 1932
CB410	Sleep on / Is it a dream	January 21, 1932
CB412	Consolation	January 12, 1932
CB412	By the fireside	January 16, 1932
CB418	Just friends	February 1, 1932
CB418	As time goes by	February 1, 1932
CB419	All of me	February 4, 1932
CB419	I'm for you 100 %	February 17, 1932
CB421	Prisoner of love	February 1, 1932
CB421	I'll make a happy landing	February 4, 1932
CB423	Now's the time to fall in love	February 1, 1932
CB423	To be worthy of you	February 5, 1932
CB425	Whistling waltz / Sweetheart	February 16, 1932
CB426	Save the last dance for me	-do-
CB426	Fire in my heart	February 17, 1932
CB427	Blues in my heart	-do-
CB427	My bluebird's back again	March 3, 1932
CB432	She didn't say yes / Try to forget	-do-
CB433	Delishious / Goodnight, little girl, goodnight	March 9, 1932
CB437	You're the one	-do-
CB437	Can't we talk it over ?	March 16, 1932
CB438	Just humming along / Tell me with a love song	-do-
CB447	Auf wiedersehen, my dear	April 16, 1932
CB447	Rain on the roof	April 20, 1932
CB448	We will always be sweethearts / One hour with you	-do-
CB458	Somebody loves you	April 16, 1932
CB458	Snuggled on your shoulder	May 11, 1932
CB459	Keepin' out of mischief now	-do-
CB459	When we're alone	June 1, 1932
CB463	Paradise / The voice in the old village choir	-do-
CB468	I'm carefree / My Mum	June 14, 1932
CB469	What makes you so adorable ?	May 11, 1932
CB469	By special permission of the copyright owners	June 14, 1932
CB473	Hoch! Caroline	June 21, 1932
CB473	Sing, Brothers!	June 28, 1932
CB479	I don't blame you / Let that be a lesson to you	-do-
CB482	What a life / A great big bunch of you	July 18, 1932
CB 483	I heard	-do-
CB 483	Cabin in the cotton	June 21, 1932
CB486	Ooh that kiss / The night shall be filled with music	July 23, 1932

(there then follows the month-long recording gap: CB501-2-3-4, made over the 9, 13, 19, 21 Sept., are still labelled merely as the S.H.C., but all following mention to Carroll Gibbons)

HOWARD JACOBS AND HIS ORCHESTRA with Neo-Bechstein piano played by Stanley Black

CB657	Trouble in Paradise / Let the world go drifting by	September 6, 1932
CB718	Liebestraum / La-Veeda	-do-

HMV B5396	In an Oriental Garden	October, 1927
-do-	Bless Her Little Heart	September, 1927
B5399	Nothing but/Broken Hearted	October, 1927
B5408	Mississippi Mud/I'm wondering who	November, 1927
B5419	Beedle-um-bo	September, 1927
B5420	Longing for someone/Sitting on the stairs	November, 1927
B5423	Swing on the Gate/I'm so jealous	December, 1927

NOTE: Those discs with only one title invariably have a side by the Savoy Orpheans or the Savoy Havana Band on the reverse.

The Savoy Orpheans and the Savoy Havana both broke up in December, 1927; the Orpheans were replaced by Fred Elizalde's Savoy Music, the Havana Band by Reggie Batten's New Savoy Orpheans. Elizalde was already a Brunswick recording artist, so his Savoy Music recorded for this company; Batten's Savoy Orpheans did not record at all, and it would appear that the Sylvians did not record subsequently either.

with THE SAVOY HOTEL ORPHEANS

Columbia CB376	There's a time and a place for everything/Sweet and Lovely	19 October, 1931
CB377	Who am I/Linda	31 October, 1931
CB381	You are my Heart's delight	25 November, 1931
-do-	The Song of Songs	16 November, 1931
CB387	White Flower of the Islands/I'm just a Darkie	25 November, 1931
CB389	Alone with my dreams/I apologise	2 December, 1931
CB393	I wanna be loved by you	-do-
-do-	Dancing till dawn	4 December, 1931
CB394	I don't know why/A faded summer love	-do-
CB400	You're Blase	17 December, 1931
-do-	Mona Lisa	31 December

A TAPE FOR HOWARD JACOBS by Ernie Bayly

As readers of The Talking Machine Review will be aware, at the request of his friend Dr. Winthrop Wetherbee, I am making up a cassette tape of the recordings of Howard Jacobs to sent to him. Several readers have already promised help, and now is the time to either send me tape recordings of your records, or the records themselves on loan. Those who have not actually promised help by this time should perhaps, at this stage, send me a list of the titles they are able to contribute in order not to duplicate work which a kind reader may have already done. I should be grateful if all this could be done fairly soon, as it feels to me that quite a long time has elapsed since the commencement of this "campaign" - and Mr. Jacobs must be wondering when he will again hear himself!!

W A N T E D

An original mahogany horn for my EDISON OPERA PHONOGRAPH.

Dr. H. White, University of Kansas Medical Center, Rainbow Boulevard, Kansas City,
Kansas 66103, U.S.A.

WANTED TO BUY European phonographs for Museum.

Dr. E. T. Drake, P.O. Box 110, Martinsville, Indiana 46151, U.S.A.

DISCURIOS. NO. 1. by Alasdair Fenton

One usually buys a record either because the song is connected with a particular memory, or the artist concerned is among one's favourites. I have bought records for either of the above reasons, and in some cases for both.

Sometimes I have discovered unusual facets about the discs in my collection and I think they make interesting reading.

One such disc is "Cruising Down the River" (on Columbia) played by Lou Preager and his Orchestra from the Hammersmith Palais de Danse. The recording dates from the mid-1940's but the tune itself was written in 1937, having lain forgotten until the "Write a Tune for £1,000" contest was held in 1945.

Two middle-aged ladies living in Clapham, Miss Emily Bodell, a retired variety singer, and Miss Nellie Tallerton, a musician, decided to dust their song and enter it for the contest. All of the songs entered were played at the Palais by Lou Preager before an audience of music publishers, and their re-action to "Cruising Down the River" was nil!

Half-an-hour later as Lou was packing up, a publisher came back into the ballroom. "Do you want the song?" asked Lou hopefully. "No!" said the publisher, "I've just come back for my overcoat". "Well, look", said Lou, "do me a favour, take the song and if you lose money on it, I'll foot the bill".

The publisher agreed and the result was the sale of over a million sheets of music. The recorded version also proved a big hit for Lou Preager himself. In 1948 the tune became a run-away hit in the United States and brought a 'gold disc' to the American bandleader Russ Morgan, selling some two million copies, as well as a further 2½ million sheets of music.

Altogether it earned some £50,000 for Emily and Nellie who both gave up their jobs playing in a restaurant orchestra. Neither ever wrote a song of this calibre again.

A curious aftermath was that when the Lou Preager disc was released in Australia it was released as by the "Rhythmic Troubadors" for it was said that his name did not mean much to the Aussies!

Thirteen years later, in 1958, on his last recording session, Lou tried a "new" sound invented by his wife. It was obtained by lining the instruments of the brass section with MINK mutes. Although the sound was different, it did not catch on, so to this day Lou Preager is still best remembered for "Cruising Down the River".

W A N T E D

Slip-on mandrel for a Pathe SALON 3-inch size.

Pathe cylinders of all sizes and cylinders other than EDISON.

Columbia cylinders except 6-inch long.

Columbia and Edison Opera and Concert Cylinders.

Early phonograph catalogues.

Edison 'Concert', 'Alva', 'Idealia' cylinder phonographs.

Edison Mahogany horn for 'Opera'.

Early Edison reproducer for early 'Gem' held in by 2 screws.

Early Berliner or Victor models 'A', 'B', 'C', 'P', etc.

Other small musical items that can be mailed.

Lumiere phonograph.

I have many items for trade, or I will purchase.

All letters answered. Thank you for your help.

Marvin L. Goldstein, 1381 Cavell Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois 60035, U.S.A.

A COLLECTOR'S PARADISE. The Southern California Outdoor Swap Meet by Tom Hawthorne.

Should any record collector within the range of this magazine be fortunate enough to pay a visit to Southern California, he would do well to drop in some Sunday to one of the many infamous Swap meets throughout the Southern California area. These events are the California equal of the flea market or rummage sale. Records of amazing variety turn up quite frequently at these affairs. If you are an opera buff, you may discover the only known recording of the obscure counter-tenor "Sgnr. Bomboliniono", no doubt an extreme rarity. And for the jazz fan, a copy of "Hesitation Blues", played by "The Jazzolians" (with a two bar kazoo solo by Bix) will undoubtedly be awaiting you.

Seriously, a great deal of fine recordings turn up at the swap meets every week. Perhaps a description of a typical swap meet will show why this is so. Paramount Swap Meet, located in Paramount, California, is perhaps the biggest meet in the area. It is held every weekend at the local Drive-in Theater. This theater is constructed with a screen at each end of the central parking area, much like two drive-ins back to back. This gives a very large parking area to work from. "Dealers" begin arriving as early as two (2) a.m. in the morning to assure themselves of obtaining a "good space. A dealer's space is nothing more than the area between the speaker posts, facing one aisle. For the use of this space for one day, the Dealer pays \$3.00. The gate opens about 5 a.m. and the dealers claim their spaces and begin unloading their merchandise.

The dealers are permitted to sell just about anything. Only certain local laws regulate sales on guns, food, animals, etc. Many dealers own their own second hand store, and take down their items every week to expose them to a large crowd of buyers. Some dealers represent new merchandise outlets, selling off their surplus or damaged stock. But by far the majority of dealers are the ones who come for one or two weeks only with a truckload of items cleaned out of their garage or attic, hoping to convert some of their "trash" into money. It is from these dealers that the collector obtains most of his treasures.

A few examples of the records that can be found for 5c and 10c each are early acoustic Al Jolson and other personalities of that era, grand opera Victors and Edisons, hot jazz on acoustic and early electric labels, and personality records from almost any era. I could go on and on, the list is almost endless.

The swap meet offers possibilities for the phonograph collector also. Although many people are becoming rapidly aware of the value of the antique machines, still they can be purchased quite reasonably if the collector is willing to do a little of his own repair work. At the swap meets, I have purchased an Edison Diamond Disc C250 for \$10.00, a Pathe Actualle. using the early acoustic speaker principle instead of the reproducer and horn system for \$20.00, a Victor V for \$15.00 and an Edison Standard for \$2.00. This again is just a small sample of the bargains to be found. To be sure, each of these machines needed some repair, but none beyond the range of the average collector.

Now, if a collector frequents these swap meets often enough, he will undoubtedly be able to lay away quite a stock of rather common machines and records, in addition to the items he keeps for his collection. These extras can help finance your collection when handled properly. A small, common, table model Victrola, perhaps worth no more than \$25.00 to a collector can be taken to a swap meet, and if it is in good playing condition, it can bring as much as \$50. The secret here is buying machines that do not work, doing the repairs yourself, and then taking the machine back to sell at a profit. Records that catch the public fancy are also popular. For example, a Caruso disc of "Celeste Aida", one that every collector has extra copies of and would want no more, could be sold at a swap meet by merely stating that it is an Original Caruso recording. Putting a high price on items seems to attract more buyers than selling the same item at a "bargain", I guess this is a trait of people in California.

Sad to say, the swap meet is gradually providing less and less records, like every other source. Soon it may be almost impossible to obtain these fine old recordings and phonographs, outside of private sales from collections. However, I am thankful that while the supply was good, I discovered the swap meet, and I can say that many of the finer items in my collection I purchased there, at a fraction of their value.

So I will extend the following invitation to any collector visiting California. Drop by a swap meet and take some time to look around. You may not find any Caruso on Zonophone, or a Duke Ellington on Autograph, but I guarantee, with a dilligent search, you will find something.

 NOTES ON EDISON'S OPERA AND IDELIA PHONOGRAPHS by Ernest C. Allen.

I won't wish to begin with dates for the first appearance of these two models. However, others have placed the Idelia as far back as 1908 and the Opera to 1911. Edison catalogue form number 1780 for March, 1910 shows and describes the Idelia. The machine used a Model C and Model H reproducer both, thus it was a combination two and four minute machine. The price was \$125.00. The case was mahogany with ornate handles at each end. The mandrel was oxidized bronze as was the cygnet crane. The cygnet crane was of the early form thus the connecting parts that joined the horn to the crane did not include an expansion spring or extension spring as it might be called. The cygnet horn was two piece all metal with mahogany simulated grain finish. The horn was a Number 11 type and therefore it had eleven petals in the bell portion. A metal ball and socket device joined the reproducer to the horn end. A recorder was provided for making records.

In the October of 1910 catalogue, form number 1865, (which is now available in reprinted form) the Idelia is offered with new Model O reproducer. Thus, the Idelia was a two and four minute machine still. The same mahogany finish horn is used. However, the cygnet crane is now of the "improved" type (*italics mine*) and thus an extension spring is now a part of the horn to crane connection. Dark red and gold finish of the mechanism replaced the oxidized bronze finish. The machine sold for \$100 but for \$125 if the buyer wished an oxidized bronze finished machine. The cygnet crane was no doubt nickel-plated. If one wished to pay additional he could have a wood horn - mahogany, spruce or inlaid pearl. A recorder and adapter ring were provided for home record making. Edison's catalogue form number 1865 second edition, May, 1911 shows no change for Idelia over the October, 1910 above mentioned catalogue.

Edison catalogue, form number 2095, 10-1-1911, shows the Opera for four minute wax amberol cylinders only. The Model L reproducer was used. The finish of the mechanism was maroon and gold. The case was mahogany with ornate handles at each end. The wood mahogany horn was self-supporting and no crane was required. No provision was made for home record making. The Opera sold for \$90.

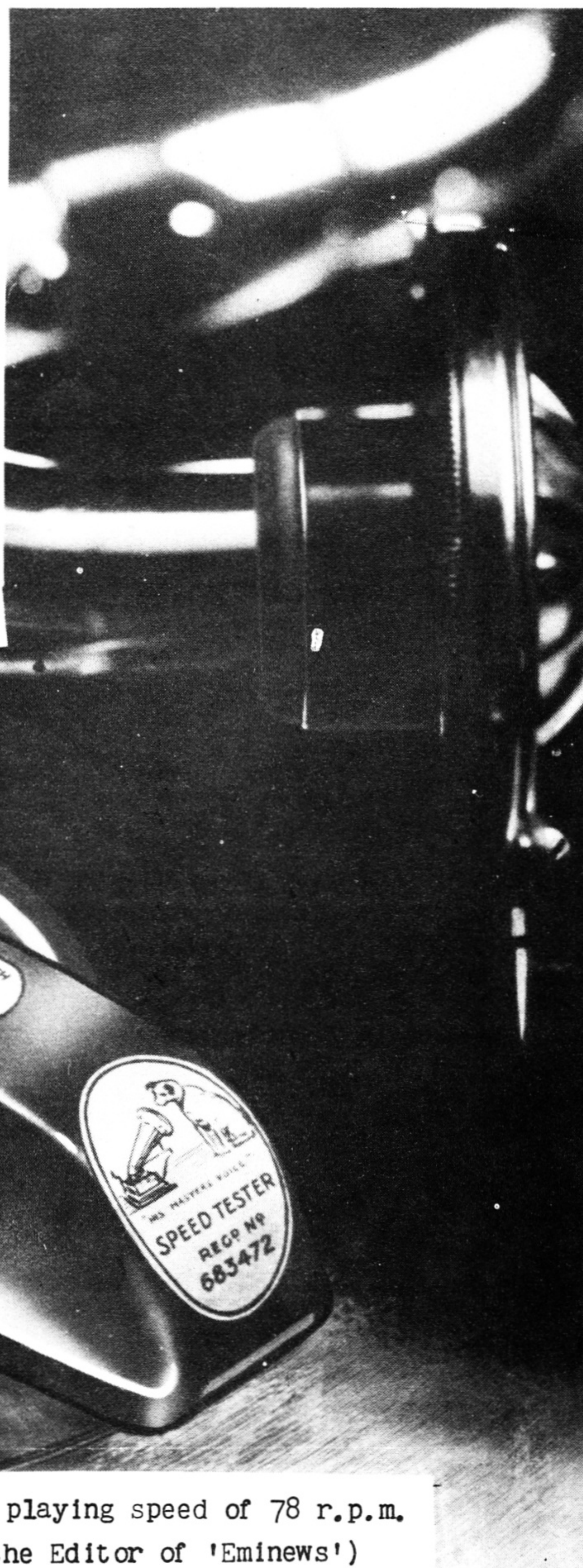
Edison catalogue, form number 2305, 12-1-1912 (now available in reprinted form) refers to the Opera model as the "Edison Concert Phonograph". It bore no relation to the Concert machine which played large diameter cylinders, of course. The Edison Concert or Opera now uses the Model A reproducer with diamond stylus for celluloid four minute cylinders. Mahogany horn and cabinet. It had the handles at each end and sold for \$90. The same machine could be purchased for \$85 but with oak horn and oak cabinet and without handles at the ends of the case.

Edison catalogue, form 2454, 9-1-1913 announced the end of outside horn phonographs except for the School Phonograph which was still offered. This catalogue is for season 1913-1914 and contains cylinder phonographs only.



GIOVANNI MARTINELLI

The supreme interpreter



A device to obtain the correct playing speed of 78 r.p.m.
(picture by the courtesy of the Editor of 'Eminews')



GERALDINE FARRAR



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The Revelers

Some impressions of those light-hearted people from THE U.S.A. who are brightening London at the New Princes. Alternately known as 'The Revellers', 'The Singing Somophores', and the 'Merry Makers', they are making a great success of their first appearance in Europe.



HYNES-